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ABSTRACT

The use of the term "physical education" in higher education began in the 1920's, with previous terminology including "gymnastics," "hygiene," and "physical culture." There is now a large constituent of educators who feel the name physical education no longer accurately describes the field. Various names have been considered, primarily "kinesiology," along with "sport science," "movement science," and "human performance." Arguments for and against adoption of each of these terms are cited. It is concluded that the term "physical education" is neither too broad nor too narrow in focus. Some educators concerned with changing the field's name in actuality want to change the field's identity. Changing the field's name will not automatically improve its status in education or in the community. The field is troubled by such problems as individuals within the field who are less than professional and by colleges offering such courses as kick-ball and dodge-ball as formal physical education courses. Educators in physical education cannot hide behind a new name, but must look to the future and change the image, not the name. (Contains 23 references.) (JDD)

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PHYSICAL EDUCATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION: WHAT SHOULD WE NAME OURSELVES?

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Before examining the inventive and pristine names[1] that are replacing the field historically known as "physical education" a brief historical panorama of how the name physical education came about would be prudent.

The first college physical education program was begun by Edward Hitchcock at Amherst College in 1861, and Mr. Hitchcock referred to this new area of education as "gymnastics" (Hackensmith, 1966; Sage, 1984). In the years following gymnastics was associated with a set of specific skills performed in the gymnasium, and was no longer an adequate term to describe physical education (Ojeme, 1984). During this same time "hygiene" was used to describe physical education because physical exercises were thought to be closely associated with preserving life. Bucher (1972) defined hygiene as "the science of preservation on one's health". Gymnastics and hygiene were too narrow in scope for characterizing physical education, so the subsequent term physical culture was adopted.

Around the turn of the century social, intellectual, and religious concerns became known as social culture, intellectual culture, and religious culture. It was, therefore, quite natural for concerns about physical

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[1] Names examined in this paper: *kinesiology, sport science, exercise and sport science, movement science, human movement studies, human performance, health and human performance, and physical education.*

activity to be known as physical culture. During this same time physical training was used synonymously with physical culture, but the term physical training was soon dropped because it was analogous to military training and drills (Ojeme, 1984).

While the study of physical culture became more comprehensive the title became less representative of the field. In the 1920's the study of physical activity became known as "physical education". Wilgoose (1979) feels the title, physical education, was accepted on such a large scale because the term "education" was associated with it. "It came to mean that physical education accomplished the goals of education through physical activity (Ojeme, 1984)."

Since the beginnings of physical education there have been numerous debates on the most exact term, title, or name to identify ourselves, but within the past several years these debates have increased. There is a large constituent that feels the name physical education no longer accurately describes our field. Wade and Baker (1992) have warned that the absence of a clearly articulated and acceptable definition of our field will have serious consequences on the structure of our programs in higher education. Various names have been presented recently, but the name most prevalent in the literature is "kinesiology".

Kinesiology[2]

There are many supporters for the adoption of the name kinesiology to replace physical education (Caldwell, 1988; Vincent, Winningham, & Caldwell, 1988; Newell, 1989; Hamm, 1992; Wade & Baker, 1992). Caldwell (1988) believes that the singularity of the name kinesiology is much more descriptive than the dualistic name of physical education. Caldwell (1988) believes that the name physical education has a dualistic meaning (i.e., mind and body are separate), and kinesiology a meaning of singularity (i.e., mind and body work in harmony). The problem in having a name with a dualistic meaning is very damaging to our field. Ojeme (1984) believes physical education will be viewed as not requiring any cognitive processes, and thus considered only a motor activity. A common stereotype of physical education "is based on the longstanding assumption that the student's mind goes to the classroom and his or her body to the gym (Caldwell, 1988)". This is Caldwell's (1988) central argument for the adoption of a non-dualistic term such as kinesiology.

Vincent et al. (1988) support Caldwell's (1988) argument that physical education suggests a false dualism.

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[2] "The science or study of human movement (Hamm, 1992)."
"The study of the art and science of human movement as it relates to sport, dance, and exercise (Vincent et al., 1988)."
According to *Webster's II New Riverside Dictionary* (1984) "the science that deals with all aspects of motion, encompassing both kinematics and dynamics (1984)".

Vincent et al. (1988) found it difficult to classify the domain of teacher and coaching preparation under the name kinesiology therefore suggested that kinesiology and physical education be linked (i.e., Department of Kinesiology and Physical Education). By including physical education within the title it would allow for less confusion and improved public understanding. As time progresses Vincent et al. (1988) believe physical education will be dropped from the department title and kinesiology be used alone.

Newell (1989) believes "the phenomenological foci for the field are the generic physical activities of posture, locomotion, and prehension as they occur in a variety of contexts...". If the subject matter we study (i.e., the phenomenon of physical activity) is extremely broad than we must adopt a name that is also broadly defined.

Hamm (1992) argues that the name physical education is too narrow in focus, and does not embrace all the dimensions that many departments have added over the last twenty years. Hamm (1992) considers kinesiology to be drawn from "different but related professional and scientific areas, including exercise physiology, motor behavior, biomechanics, and sport psychology".

There has been an equal amount of opposition to the name kinesiology as support in recent years (Thomas, 1987; Cicciarella, 1988; Piper, 1988; Kretchmar, 1989). Thomas

(1987) found that there are two problems with the idea of adopting a name to symbolize our focus on human movement that is generic. The first problem we must consider is weather or not we truly study human movement in a generic sense. We do study human movement, but it is normally in a goal-oriented physical activity (i.e., during exercise or sport) (Thomas, 1987). The human movement may be generic, broad, or general, but the goal-oriented physical activity we examine human movement during is much more specific. The second problem we must consider is the exclusive claim to studying human movement because many other areas study factors of human movement (i.e., linguistics and robotics).

Cicciarella (1988) agrees that our profession needs a new name, and that physical education is normally associated with teacher preparation but objects to the name kinesiology. Cicciarella's (1988) main objection to the name kinesiology is that the term is not understood by the general public, and can be interpreted in more than one manner. Kinesiology is often used synonymously with biomechanics. Piper (1988) believes that kinesiology is too narrow because it can imply specifically the study of the functions of muscles.

Kretchmar (1989) found weaknesses with the name kinesiology. If kinesiology is understood literally it makes us look extremely presumptuous. As Thomas (1987) illustrated there are other fields that study factors of

human movement. Human movement is such a expansive phenomenon and can not be used as a description for a specific field of study.

Caldwell (1988) and Vincent et al. (1988) both expressed that physical education leads to a false dualism, but in essence I feel it is non-dualistic. If this statement is true than Caldwell (1988), and Vincent et al. (1988) have little basis for their argument. It is interesting to note that even though Vincent et al. (1988) see physical education as a dualistic term they still incorporate the term within their department title suggestion. Vincent et al. (1988) designed a non-dualistic/dualistic term which is to be less confusing??

Newell (1989) and Hamm (1992) argue that the title physical education is too narrow in focus, but I feel they are looking at the teacher preparation aspect of physical education as the definition of the term rather than a single aspect.

Sport Science[3]

The title sport science has been supported by Thomas (1987), Cicciarella (1988), and Kretchmar (1989). Cicciarella (1988) offers the name sport science as an

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[3] "The scientific study of sport (Thomas, 1987)."
According to *Webster's II New Riverside Dictionary* (1984) sport - "A physical activity, especially one with a set form and body of rules," science - "the study and theoretical explanation of natural phenomena."

alternative to physical education, but is still dissatisfied with the name because it does not "implicitly embrace all of the professional endeavors...being within the profession". Cicciarella (1988) does not elaborate beyond this one statement, and gives no additional proposal other than his dissatisfaction with the name physical education (Cicciarella (1988) links the name physical education with teacher preparation).

While Thomas (1987) argues against the use of the name kinesiology he recommends the name sport science because it is a more effective description than physical education and is less broad than kinesiology. There is a chance that the "sport" of sport science may be arbitrarily related to athletics, but there is less explanation and clarification required than the broad name kinesiology.

Kretchmar (1989) concludes that the use of the term sport in any name being considered is an extremely valuable description for our profession. Over the years sport has broadened its overall meaning to include the ideas of movement, exercise, athletics, and dance. Although the term sport has broadened in meaning it still takes on a narrow scope with some (is related to specific athletic activities), and is sometimes considered an activity which involves the "athletically gifted" individual (Kretchmar, 1989). With the use of the term exercise to describe all

those non-sport[4] related activities that still involve physical activity Kretchmar (1989) develops the name exercise and sport science.

Although there are no formal arguments against the use of the name sport science many feel the name is not any more implicit than physical education (Cicciarella, 1988; Ojeme, 1984). It is very easy to agree with this statement. Sport science is less descriptive, and narrower in scope than physical education. How does teacher preparation and pedagogy fit under the name sport science? If I am a sport scientist does that mean I can only research my interests; can I make practical applications of what I learn? Schwab (1967) incorporated two of Aristotle's Classes of Disciplines into physical education: theoretical and practical. The name sport science only describes the theoretical discipline, and could eventually lead to a purely theoretical side to physical education and dismissing all practical applications.

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[4] Non-sport - only as it relates to the traditional narrow focused definition of sport.

Movement Science[5]

Ojeme (1984) developed the name human movement studies based on the premise that it was the one common unifying idea that all aspects of physical education examine. Ojeme (1984) felt if human movement studies were accepted as the hub of our discipline then all other concerns would radiate from this idea. Physical education, health education, physical therapy, sport medicine, sport administration, and physical recreation were all sub-categories or concerns of human movement studies (Ojeme, 1984). Ojeme (1984) felt that the name physical education had not outlived its usefulness, but its usage required some modification.

Higgins (1989) later refined the name human movement studies into movement science. Higgins (1989) saw movement science as a common interest within our field just as Ojeme (1984) had seen human movement studies as a common interest. The name movement science is a great unifying interest, but can not naturally carry over to be an accurate description of our field. Movement science developed out of the dissatisfaction of a name of broad meaning (physical education) being used for our field and is itself a name of broader meaning. Movement science can be discredited for many of the same reasons that kinesiology is discredited because they are very similar in meaning.

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[5] "The study of movement (Higgins, 1989)."

Human Performance[6]

Bird (1988) believes that human performance is the unifying concern in our field, but the aspect of health is not adequately illustrated in the name human performance. Bird (1988) argues for the need of a unifying "umbrella", and has presented the name health and human performance to explain our discipline. The four sub-categories under health and human performance are general physical education, professional physical education, health education and safety, and recreation (Bird, 1988). Although the sub-categories specifically explain all aspects of our field the general name of health and human performance is too broad. Piper (1988) argues against the name human performance because of its broad implication of "all physical, mental, and social activities of man".

The two unifying concerns in the literature concerning the name physical education are either: (a) the name is broad in meaning, or the inverse; (b) the name is too narrow in scope. Janz, Cottle, Mahaffey, and Phillips (1989) found the four factors most often cited for name change were:

1. the name more accurately describes the unit's areas of specialization;
2. reflects current curricular priorities;
3. enhances prestige;
4. enhances image within the academic community.

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[6] "All of the physical, mental, and social activities of man (Piper, 1988)."
According to *Webster's II New Riverside Dictionary* (1984) "a human being involved in the act, process, or manner of performing".

Janz et al. (1989) found the four factors most often cited for name retention were:

1. the name accurately describes the unit's areas of specialization;
2. easily recognized by constituency;
3. tradition;
4. avoids fragmentation within the profession.

We have examined the many rationales for a name change within our discipline now it would be judicious to examine the rationales for keeping the name physical education.

Physical Education[7]

There have been many arguments against the name physical education to describe our field, but I feel most of them are irrational. The solutions are often worse than the perceived problem. As stated previously the main difficulties with the use of physical education as the name for our field are its either broad or narrow focus, and it no longer adequately explains what we do. If examining the definition of physical education in its true form you will find it is an exceptional description of what we do and is neither too broad nor too narrow in focus.

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[7] "The making of movement patterns that help realize the inherent potential of each individual as a performer (Bressan, 1979)."

According to *Webster's II New Riverside Dictionary* (1984) "instruction in the development, care, and exercise of the human body, including calisthenics, sports, and hygiene".

Inaccurate definition - "teaching of sport, dance, and exercise in a school setting (Vincent et al., 1988)".

In 1983, the National Commission on Excellence in Education recommended that all high school curricula include four years of English, and three years of math, science, and social studies. In 1987, the Commission added a requirement of two years of physical education. Never before has our field received such national recognition and support (Piper, 1988). Do you think the Commission would have required two years of kinesiology, human performance, or movement studies? Piper (1988) sums up the problem of name change very nicely: "I don't believe that any losses in our special field have been due to the title or that a change in the title will automatically improve its status in education or in the community". The genuine discrepancy within our field is not an issue of name it is one of identity, and image.

Bressan (1979), Fraleigh (1985), Greendorfer (1987), and Sage (1984) have all argued that the academic disciplines of physical education will not survive if the name "physical education" does not resolve the problem of identity for the profession. Are we searching for a new name or a new identity? The main difficulty with the name physical education is the incorrect assumption that physical education focuses on occupational preparation. Is this because the people outside our field are ignorant or have we failed to educate them? I feel the problem of identity stems from within our own profession, and our inability to educate people outside our profession what we are all about.

This fundamental problem is illustrated by Sage (1984):

> The fundamental identity crisis we have suffered in the disciplinary and professional preparation aspects of our field is that we have not been willing to see ourselves-and others have not seen us-as a field fulfilling the same roles in higher education as other fields of study.

If we want to change our identity we must concern ourselves with the image we project to others outside and inside our profession.

The image we project about ourselves outside and inside our profession is crucial to our perceived identity. Bird (1988) illustrates an unfortunately too often image of our field by others in higher education:

> 'Most of us who have been around for a while pay little attention to their curriculum. The general feeling is that it lacks rigor and dishes out quasi scientific substance to our most minimally qualified students. They seem to have no theoretical orientation or direction and produce little in the way of research'.

Unfortunately this criticism is well deserved. There are many people within our field who are less than professional. They feel our profession is "easy", and drift through the system towards a degree. We are to blame for this problem as well. Because we allow less than professional people in our field to continue to damage our image we are forced to accept the consequences. Many people have their first negative image of physical education at a very young age. When they attend a school that offers kick-ball and dodge-ball as a formal course in physical education how can anyone take us seriously.

We must convey to our students that if they want respect they must earn respect; if they want to be taken seriously they must be serious professionals. None of us want the negative image we are sometimes forced to bear, but changing our name will only solve the problem for a period of time.

> By the year 2000, the phrase 'physical education' will be passe and will be replaced by something not necessarily better, but surely more relevant to the age (Lucas, 1986).

We can not hide behind a new name. We must look to the future and change our image not our name.

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